

1 ABSTRACT

2 Transform coefficients for blocks of pixels in an original picture are quantized to
3 produce respective sets of quantization indices for the blocks of pixels. The quantization
4 indices for at least some of the blocks are produced by using a quantization step size that
5 is not uniform within each block. Largest magnitude quantization indices are selected
6 from the respective sets of quantization indices for (run, level) encoding to produce the
7 (run, level) encoded picture. For example, MPEG-2 coded video includes a set of non-
8 zero AC discrete cosine transform (DCT) coefficients for 8x8 blocks of pixels. For
9 scaling the MPEG-2 coded video, non-zero AC DCT coefficients are removed from the
10 MPEG-2 coded video to produce reduced-quality MPEG-2 coded video that includes no
11 more than a selected number of largest magnitude quantization indices for the non-zero
12 AC DCT coefficients for each 8x8 block.